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Message Text

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64
ACTION EB-07

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-10 ISO-00 PA-01 PRS-01 USIA-06

FEA-01 ERDA-05 AID-05 CEA-01 CIAE-00 CIEP-01 COME-00

DODE-00 FPC-01 H-02 INR-07 INT-05 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05

OMB-01 PM-04 SAM-01 OES-03 SP-02 SS-15 STR-04 TRSE-00

/104 W
---------- 053512
R 201710Z OCT 75
FM AMEMBASSY RABAT
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6748
INFO AMEMBASSY ALGIERS
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY MADRID

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: EINV ENRG MO
SUBJECT: OIL DISCOVERY IN MOROCCO?

REF: RABAT 4608

1. OFFICIAL BLACKOUT REMAINS ON HYDROCARBON FIND NEAR ESSAOUIRA. STRIKE ALMOST CERTAINLY IS OIL, BUT SIZE REMAINS IN DOUBT.

2. US GEOLOGIST WITH GOOD CONTACTS IN BRPM DURING PERIODIC VISIT TO MOROCCO LAST WEEK TALKED TO BRPM OFFICIAL AND THEN EO EMBASSY. SOURCE TALKED IN TERMS OF FIELD SEVERAL HUNDRED METERS IN DEPTH AND EXTENDING TEN KILOMETERS EACH DIRECTION. SHIRTCUFF CALCULATION BY US GEOLOGIST SUGGESTED 100 MILLION METRIC TON FIND. UNCLEAR TO EMBASSY WHETHER THIS REFERRED TO TOTAL CONTENT OF FIELD OR ESTIMATED ULTIMATE PRODUCTION. EVEN IN LATTER CASE, FIND OF THIS MAGNITUDE WOULD BE
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IMPORTANT SINCE IT COULD SUPPLY MOROCCO'S IMPORTS FOR UP

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TO TEN YEARS (CURRENT IMPORTS 2.5 MILLION MT).

3. FOREIGN EMBASSY SOURCE WITH INDEPENDENT GOM CONTACTS RELATES DIFFERENT TALE. FIND DISMISSED AS MINI-FIELD WITH ESTIMATED PRODUCTION OF ONLY 30 THOUSAND TONS. ADDS THAT GEOLOGIC CONDITIONS SUGGEST SEVERAL SIMILAR SMALL POCKETS IN AREA (THIS COULD BE ALTERNATIVE VERSION OF "TEN KILOMETERS IN EACH DIRECTION").

4. AFTER TALKS WITH DOZENS OF OIL GEOLOGISTS OVER PAST YEAR, WE WOULD NOT BE SURPRISED AT ANYTHING. MINI-STRIKE REPORT IS CONSISTENT WITH GENERALLY HEAVILY-FAULTED MOROCCAN GEOLOGY AND FITS IN WITH WHAT SEVERAL OIL MEN HAVE PREDICTED FOR REGION. BUT EXPLORATIONS CONTINUE, SUGGESTING THAT EVEN MAJORS ARE ATTRACTED BY POSSIBILITY OF STRIKING AN UNDISTURBED FIELD OF WORTHWHILE MAGNITUDE. AND ESSAOUIRA AREA IS ONE OF PRIME ATTRACTION.

5. IN CIRCUMSTANCES, EMBASSY IS RESERVING JUDGMENT. FORE-GOING CONFLICTING REPORTS PASSED ON ONLY IN INTEREST OF KEEPING WASHINGTON AGENCIES ABREAST OF MOROCCAN OIL STORY. NEUMANN

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